

question, not the person, is the subject of debate. The presiding officer cannot close debate as long as any member wishes to discuss the question.

### **Step 5: Putting the Question (calling for a vote)**

When it appears that debate has ended, the presiding officer asks, "Are you ready for the question?" or "Is there further discussion?" If no one rises to obtain the floor the chair again states the motion and calls for the vote. "As many as are in favor, say 'aye', those opposed, 'no.'" The vote is usually taken by voice vote, but may be a standing vote or by show of hands. The chair always asks for the negative vote, even when the affirmative appears unanimous. The maker of the motion is not allowed to speak against the motion but may vote against it.

### **Step 6: Announcing the Results**

The chair announces the result of the vote immediately, including:

- 1) Which side has won: Example: "The ayes have it."
- 2) The result of the voting: Example: "The motion carries."
- 3) The action that must result: Example: "The club will ...."

## 20.6. Classification of Motions

Motions are classified into four types depending upon their purpose.

1. Main motions are used to introduce a main item or question of business to the group. Only one main motion may be before the group at a time. It must be disposed of before another item may be considered. There are other procedural motions which may be considered, but only one main motion may be considered at a time.

2. Subsidiary motions will modify, defer, remove, or dispose of the main motion. Subsidiary motions take precedence over main motions; they must be handled first. They include motions to:

- lay an item of business on the table,
- close debate,
- limit or extend debate,
- postpone to a fixed time,
- refer to committee, and
- amend or postpone indefinitely.

3. Privilege motions relate to order and the rights and welfare of the members. They rank higher than subsidiary motions or main motions. They include motions to:

- call for the orders of the day,
- adjourn,
- recess,
- raise a question of privilege, and
- set the time to adjourn.

4. Incidental motions relate to procedures. Incidental motions have no rank and are considered before the motions from which they stem. Incidental motions include those that:

- appeal a ruling of the chair,
- suspend the rules,
- rise to a point of order,
- withdraw motions,
- reconsider,
- rescind, and
- take from the table.

## 20.7.Minutes

The minutes of the organization become the permanent record of the group's actions. The minutes are a record of facts, not opinion. They are a record of what happened and not the thoughts or feelings of members or officers. The secretary is responsible for recording and keeping the minutes of all meetings. They should be written clearly, in a manner that leaves no room to question actions taken by the assembly. An absent member should be able to read the minutes and have a clear understanding of the business transacted at the meeting. All names should be clearly recorded, such as Nancy Jones not Ms. Jones.

The following guidelines for writing minutes suggest a format which will aid the secretary in preparing the minutes of each meeting.

### Guidelines for Writing Minutes

1. Include in the first paragraph:

- the kind of meeting (regular, special, annual, etc.),
- the name of the group,
- the date, time, and place of the meeting,
- whether or not the president and secretary were present and, in their absence, the name of their substitute(s), and
- the disposition of the minutes of the last meeting.

**Example**

The regular meeting of the Summerville Extension Homemakers' club was held on September 3, 1985, at 7:00 p.m. at the home of Jane Smith, 444 Main Street, Summerville, KY. The president being the chair and the secretary being present, Mary Jones presented the devotion for the evening. Following the roll call of members, the minutes of the last meeting were approved as read.

2. The body should include a separate paragraph for each subject matter and should show:

A. All main motions or motions to bring a main question before the assembly, the exception being motions which were withdrawn. When recording a motion, include:

- the exact wording of the motion as adopted or otherwise disposed of, the disposition of the motion, including temporary disposition, and any primary or secondary amendments and all adhering secondary amendments that were pending, and
- usually, the name of the person making the motion in all important motions

B. All points of order and appeals, whether sustained or lost, and reasons given by the chair for the ruling.

**Example**

The treasurer reported a disbursement of \$15.75 to the Summerville Florist for the annual meeting centerpiece, leaving a balance of \$168.15 as of September 2, 1985.

The scholarship committee report was received and placed on file.

The special committee that was appointed to investigate the possibility of the club contributing to the "Community Pantry" reported. Joan Thomason, the chairman, moved that each club member bring canned or packaged food items to the October, November, and December meetings to be contributed to the community project. After debate, the motion was adopted.

Lori Brown moved that the club pay the \$5.00 registration fee and the luncheon costs for both the club president and vice president who will be attending the State Homemakers' Leadership Workshop in Lexington, KY, November 10-12. The motion was seconded and carried.

The president announced the next meeting would be October 5 at Liz Trotter's home, 615 Appleton Way at 7:00 p.m.

The president introduced the program, "Weight Reduction with a Balanced Diet" presented by June Chaney and Barbara Dillon.

**3. Closing**

- A. The last paragraph of the minutes should contain the hour of adjournment.
- B. The minutes should be signed by the secretary or the person who took the minutes.

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

**Example**

, Secretary

## **20.8.Treasurer's Report**

At each meeting of the organization, the chair may ask for a report from the treasurer. This report may be a statement of the balance on hand or the balance minus outstanding obligations. This report requires no action by the group.

However, the treasurer is required to make a full financial statement once a year and in some cases more often. An annual report always should be audited. If an annual report has not been audited prior to the meeting, the chair will say, "The financial report will be referred to the auditing committee."

When the amount of money is quite large, it is advisable to use independent accountants. This can be expensive and should be budgeted. In many organizations the financial statements are audited by two or more of its members. This committee is usually appointed in advance of the annual meeting and the financial statement is prepared early to assist the committee in completing their work.

When the auditor's report consists of an endorsement of the treasurer's financial report by stating that it has been found to be correct, the treasurer can simply read this statement at the end of the report. If needed, the chairman of the auditing committee can present a detailed report at this time. The chair then asks the members if they want to adopt the auditor's report. The adoption of this report simply relieves the treasurer of responsibility for the period covered in the report, except in case of fraud.

If the auditor finds the treasurer's books incorrect, the assembly may approve the auditor's report and consider the incorrect handling of funds as an item under new business. Or, the assembly may choose not to approve the auditor's report and may ask for a new auditor.

The form and content of the financial report will depend on the size of the organization, frequency of reporting, the nature of the activities, etc. The financial report is made to provide information to the members. A report of details and separate payments that make it difficult to understand should be avoided.

## **20.9.Elections of Officers**

The bylaws of the group usually specify the procedure for the election of officers of the organization. However, if this is not the case for your group, the following procedures may be used.

### **Nominations**

Nominations can be secured in several ways. The two most common are nominations from the floor and nominations by committee.

### **Procedure for floor nominations**

For nominations from the floor, the chair declares the floor open for nominations and any member may nominate another member. The chair does not have to recognize the member for a nomination to be made. The member simply stands and says, "Madam Chairman, I nominate Susie Martin." No second is required for a nomination. Unless an objection is made, a member may nominate more than one person for an office, as long as there are not other members wishing to nominate someone. The same person can be nominated for more than one office. If elected to more than one office, the member may choose the office he prefers. If the member is absent the group will decide by vote and then elect a person to fill the other office.

**Chair/President:** *"Nominations are now in order for the office of president."*

**Member:** *"I nominate Ms. A."*

**Chair/President:** *"Ms. A is nominated. Are there any further nominations for the office of president?"*

The chair proceeds in this manner through all offices in the order the offices are listed in the by-laws, until nominations have been made for each office

### **Procedure for committee nominations**

If a nominating committee is used, it should be elected by the members of the organization or the executive board. The president should not appoint this committee, nor be an ex-officio member of the committee. In most organizations the bylaws will provide guidelines for an election using a nominating committee. Any member of a nominating committee also may become a nominee for an office. Normally members of the committee will contact each person they wish to nominate to ensure that the candidate will accept the position if elected.

The reporting procedure to be used by the nominating committee is usually specified in the bylaws. Often it is prior to the meeting where the election is to take place. It always should be formally presented at a regular meeting even if the membership has had prior notification.

**Chair/President:** *"Will the chairman present the report of the nominating committee."*

**Chairman of nominating committee:** *"Madam President, the nominating committee submits the following nominations: For president, Mrs. A; for vice president, Mrs. B; and for secretary-treasurer, Mrs. C." (continue for all vacancies)*

**Chair/President:** *"Mrs. A has been nominated for president. Are there any further nominations for president?"*

(If there is a nomination from the floor the chair repeats the name of the nominee.

*"Mrs. D has been nominated for president. Are there any further nominations?"*

**Chair/President:** *"Mrs. B has been nominated for vice president." Are there any further nominations for vice president?"*

(The chair proceeds in this manner through all offices.)

*"Are there any further nominations for any of the offices? [pause] Hearing none, the chair declares the nominations closed."*

## Voting

As with nominations, most organizations will have a prescribed method, or an established custom, in the bylaws for voting. Election by ballot generally is used by organizations; however, the viva voce also is appropriate when the election is largely uncontested and when the bylaws do not require a ballot vote.

### Election by Ballot

If no voting takes place before all nominations are closed, one ballot may be used. When nominations are known prior to the meeting, ballots may be prepared in advance. Space should be left on the ballot for writing in additional nominations for each office.

The chair appoints tellers to distribute, collect, and count the ballots. The number of tellers varies depending on the size of the voting assembly. It is the tellers' responsibility to see that no member casts more than one ballot. This voting procedure also should be fixed by rule or custom. When everyone seems to have voted, the chair asks, "Have all voted who wish to do so?" If there is no response, the chair says, "If no one else wishes to vote, [pause], the chair declares the polls closed." The tellers collect the ballots and begin counting the votes, usually in another room.

In recording the ballots, tellers should be instructed to:

- not include blank ballots or blanks on a ballot in determining the total number of votes cast,
- accept ballots which may contain small technical errors such as a misspelled name,
- declare illegal two or more ballots folded together,
- declare illegal sections of ballots where the member votes for more than one candidate for an office and no clear choice can be determined, and
- declare illegal unintelligible ballots. If the number of unintelligible ballots will affect the outcome of the election, the chair of the tellers should report this to the chair who will ask the assembly to decide how these ballots should be recorded.

All illegal ballots should be counted in determining the total number of votes cast for figuring the majority. However, no candidate benefits with a vote from an illegal ballot. (The same applies to motions.)

Following the counting, the chairman of the tellers prepares a report which contains:

- the number of votes cast,
- the number required for a majority,
- the number received by each nominee, and
- the number of illegal votes.

The chairman of the tellers addresses the chair, reads the report, and hands it to the chair. The chair reviews the written report and declares the winners. If one or more of the candidates does not receive a majority of votes, the chair/president announces, "No election," and directs that new ballots be distributed for the office where no candidate was elected. The procedure is repeated until one candidate is elected. No name is removed from the ballot unless so directed in the bylaws.

### **Election by Viva Voce**

This method is generally used where the bylaws do not require voting by ballot and a candidate is unopposed. However, it also may be used when there is more than one candidate for an office by using the following procedure:

**Chair/President:** *"Those in favor of Mrs. A for president, say 'aye.' Those opposed 'no.'"*

If a majority vote for Mrs. A... *"The ayes have it and Mrs. A is elected president."*

If the no's have a majority...

*"The no's have it and Mrs. A is not elected president. Those in favor of Mrs. B [the next nominee] say 'aye.' Those opposed 'no.'"*

When a candidate receives a majority she is declared the winner and no other candidates are voted on. The chair moves on to the next office for which an election is being held.

When using this procedure, the members wishing to vote for a later candidate must vote against those preceding him or her. This is considered to give an unfair advantage to those voted on earlier in the procedure.

## **20.10. Conclusions**

Every member of the organization should know the basic rules of parliamentary procedure. The presiding officer will find it helpful to learn more rules than are used. Practice will ensure smooth meetings and fairness to all. The use of parliamentary procedure in all meetings will help the group transact business efficiently, protect the

group from leaders who dictate policies, and protect the rights of each individual in the group.

Remember, if you are overly strict with rules and procedures, members may be afraid to speak up. Parliamentary rules, like all other rules, should be applied with common sense

## 20.11. Parliamentary Terms to Know

Before parliamentary procedure can be effective, members must be familiar with frequently used terms.

**Adjourn** - to end a meeting

**Amend** - changing a main motion by striking out, inserting, adding to, or substituting

**Chair** - the presiding officer; "addressing the chair" means speaking to the president or chairman

**Debate** - the parliamentary name given to the discussion of a motion

**Division of the House** - voting by standing and counting

**Ex Officio** - by virtue of the office; a member of the committee by virtue of being president may vote unless specified otherwise in bylaws

**Floor** - the privilege of speaking before the assembly

**Majority** - one more than half of the number voting; if 10 ballots are counted, six would be a majority.

**Minutes** - official record of business transacted in a meeting

**Motion** - a formal proposal for action by the group

**Question** - the item of business before the assembly for vote

**Quorum** - the number or proportion of members required to be present for business to be transacted.

**Resolution** - a form of main motion which may or may not have a preamble describing the reasons for the proposal

**Second** - motions are seconded by a member of the assembly; an action which indicates interest of at least a second member in bringing the question before the group

**Table** - a motion "to table" allows the assembly to put aside the pending question temporarily when something more urgent has arisen

**Viva Voce** - (v§-va-vÇ-c') by word of mouth, spoken, oral

## 20.12. Copyright Notice

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